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DIST. 21 JULY 1976

FOIA(b) (3) - 50 USC 3024(i) (1) -
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COUNTRY ARGENTINA/CUBA

SUBJECT BACKGROUND TO OPERATION LEADING TO THE
DISCOVERY BY THE SECURITY FORCES OF MARIO
SANTUCHO, COMMANDER OF THE PEOPLE'S
REVOLUTIONARY ARMY

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1-3157
JUL 26 1976

1. THE INFORMATION WHICH ENABLED THE SECURITY
FORCES TO LOCATE MARIO ROBERTO SANTUCHO.

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Argentine
Cuba

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COMMANDER OF THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY ARMY (ERP),
WAS PROVIDED BY AN ERP OFFICIAL WHO CONTACTED THE
ARGENTINE ARMY AND OFFERED TO REVEAL THE WHEREABOUTS
OF SANTUCHO AND OTHER ERP LEADERS IN EXCHANGE FOR THE
RELEASE OF HIS WIFE WHO HAD BEEN PICKED UP. THE ARMY
NOT ONLY AGREED, BUT ALSO PROMISED THE ERP OFFICIAL THAT
HE WOULD BE GIVEN MONEY AND ASSISTANCE IN LEAVING ARGENTINA
WITH HIS FAMILY. THE ARMY THEREUPON TOOK THE ERP OFFICIAL
TO SEE HIS WIFE TO ASSURE HIM THAT SHE WAS BEING
HELD AND WAS WELL; AFTER WHICH THE ERP OFFICIAL PINPOINTED
THE BUILDING IN VILLA MARTELLI IN BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE
NEAR THE CAPTIAL WHERE SANTUCHO AND OTHER ERP LEADERS
WERE HIDING OUT. THE ERP OFFICIAL SAID THAT SANTUCHO HAD
BEEN LIVING IN THIS BUILDING FOR ABOUT A MONTH. [REDACTED]

COMMENT: AS REPORTED IN THE NEWS MEDIA, A SHOOTOUT
BETWEEN THE SECURITY FORCES AND EXTREMISTS TOOK PLACE
IN VILLA MARTELLI ON 19 JULY 1976 RESULTING IN THE DEATH Argentina
OF SANTUCHO, ERP LEADER JORGE BENITO ~~ORTEGA~~ AGA Cuba
AND OTHERS WHO HAVE NOT YET BEEN POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED.)

2. THE ERP OFFICIAL ALSO TOLD THE AUTHORITIES THAT

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● (classification)

BECAUSE OF THE DANGER TO SANTUCHO'S LIFE AS A RESULT
OF THE COUNTERSUBVERSIVE CAMPAIGN IN ARGENTINA, SANTUCHO
WAS PLANNING TO TRAVEL IN LATE JULY TO CUBA VIA MENDOZA
IN ARGENTINA, CHILE AND EUROPE, TO REMAIN IN CUBA ABOUT
A MONTH. [REDACTED] COMMENT: SANTUCHO'S WIFE, HER PARENTS
AND HER CHILDREN BY A FORMER MARRIAGE ARE BELIEVED TO BE
IN CUBA.) [REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] A PLANE TICKET TO CUBA WAS FOUND ON
SANTUCHO'S BODY.)

3. THE ERP OFFICIAL SAID THAT EARLIER IN JULY SANTUCHO
HAD MET WITH MARIO FIRMENICH, COMMANDER OF THE Argentinos
MONTONEROS, TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS REGARDING THE
POSSIBILITY OF A MERGER OF THE ERP WITH THE MONTONEROS.
A SITUATION WHICH WAS STILL BEING NEGOTIATED BY THE
TWO ORGANIZATIONS AS OF 19 JULY. ACCORDING TO THE
ERP OFFICIAL, SANTUCHO ALSO ASKED FIRMENICH FOR MONEY,
BUT FIRMENICH REFUSED, POINTING OUT THAT THE ERP ALREADY
OWED THE MONTONEROS U.S. \$600,000. THE MEETING BETWEEN
SANTUCHO AND FIRMENICH WAS HELD IN THE NORTHERN SUBURBS

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OF BUENOS AIRES, THE ERP OFFICIAL SAID THAT A LIKELY
REPLACEMENT FOR SANTUCHO AS COMMANDER OF THE ERP IS

~~LUIS MATTINI~~ Argentina

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